BRITISH COLUMBIA
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BCStats

Infoline

Contact: bcstats.infoline@gov.bc.ca Issue: 08-13 March 28th, 2008

- **BC makes biggest net gain from inter-provincial migration in the country during 2007**
- **Retail sales inch down in January**
- **Nearly a third of British Columbians compost organic waste**

## Population

- **British Columbia's population grew 0.25% during the fourth quarter of 2007, reaching 4,413,973.** Over half of the increase was due to international migration, with a net inflow of 5,664 persons.

  Net inter-provincial migration to BC was the highest among the regions (2,499) for a second straight quarter. Saskatchewan, Atlantic Canada, and the Territories were the only regions to which the province lost population. The biggest net contributors of migrants to BC were Alberta (2,036) and Ontario (563).

  Saskatchewan (+0.33%) posted the strongest population growth for the second quarter in a row, followed closely by Alberta (+0.32%) and Manitoba (+0.27%). Growth in the West and North drove the Canadian population expansion to 0.16%, its highest fourth-quarter increase in a decade.

  *Annual* net inter-provincial migration increased 31% over 2006. With 13,385 net inter-provincial migrants, 2007 marked the first year since 1996 that BC gained more inter-provincial migrants than any other region. *Data Source: Statistics Canada*

## The Economy

- **Sales by retailers in the province inched down -0.2% (*seasonally adjusted*) in January, the only slowdown in the country.** Retailers of furniture, household furnishings & electronics posted gains, as sales bounced back after declining in December. Clothing, building & outdoor home supplies and general merchandise stores also had a good month, but other retailers did not fare as well. In the automotive sector, gas stations and new & used car dealers posted notable losses. Food sales were also down in January.

  With widespread growth in most sectors, national sales were up 1.5%. Automotive retailers saw sales speed up, albeit mainly for passenger cars. Passenger car dealers in Atlantic Canada were particularly affected by the upturn, and total retail sales in those provinces were all up by more than 3.0%. Cash registers in Quebec rang in 2.7% more than in December, and in the rest of the country, sales increased at rates ranging from 0.1% in Alberta to 1.8% in Manitoba.
  *Data Source: Statistics Canada & BC Stats*

- **The number of British Columbians receiving regular employment insurance (EI) benefits inched up (+1.1% *seasonally adjusted*) to 37,280 in January.** Nationally, the number of EI beneficiaries was down slightly (-0.7%). Total recipients declined in most provinces, offsetting increases in New Brunswick (+0.5%), BC and Alberta (+1.8%). *Data Source: Statistics Canada*

- **Production at sawmills and planing mills in BC was significantly lower (-20.9%) in January than in the same month last year.** Mills in the Interior produced 22.3% less lumber while coastal mills cut output by 9.6%. Canadian production was also down (-18.9%), largely because of slowed activity in Ontario (-31.2%), BC, and Quebec (-5.8%). *Data Source: Statistics Canada*

## Heritage Institutions

- **BC's heritage institutes accounted for 15% of total Canadian revenues in 2006.** The nation's heritage institutions (excluding nature parks and archives) received over $1.0 billion in operating revenues (both earned and unearned) in 2006,

**Report** Recent Trends in Off-Reserve Aboriginal Labour Force Participation

Did you know...
19% of British Columbians would love a chance to touch the Holy Grail;
16% would prefer to lay hands on the Stanley Cup. *Source: Ipsos Canada*

up 1.3% from 2005. Non-profit institutions generated most (88%) of this total.

History and science museums, exhibition centres, planetariums and observatories accounted for a combined 43% of total operating revenue. Art museums and galleries produced a further 24% of overall revenues as did botanical gardens, conservatories, aquariums and zoos. The remainder was generated by historic and heritage sites. *Data Source: SC, Cat. # 87-F0002-XIE*

## Waste Disposal

- **The diversion of organic waste appears to be growing in popularity.** In 2004, the average Canadian sent 51 kilograms of organic waste for composting, compared to just 32 kilograms in 2000. Over this four-year period, the amount of organic waste composted by the waste management industry increased by 70.0% to 1.7 million tonnes. Most (approximately two thirds) of this organic waste was generated by the residential sector. In 2000, organics made up 16% of all materials diverted from landfills and by 2004, approximately 21% of these materials were composted.

Nearly a third (30%) of British Columbian households composted in 2006, slightly above the national average (27%). Most of these households were backyard composters who used a compost bin or pile or who dug organic wastes down into their garden. Despite having less access to curbside organics collection programs, more than three quarters (80%) of households in BC that compost do so year-round. This is perhaps due to a somewhat milder climate near the coastal parts of the province as in other provinces, composting slows substantially in winter months.

On a per capita basis, the Eastern-most regions appear to be the most avid composters, with three of the Atlantic Canadian provinces topping the list with the highest diversion rates of organic materials. The overall gain in organics diversion across Canada is attributable to the introduction of new composting programs and the expansion of existing organics collection (leaf and yard waste) programs to accept food wastes.

*Data Source: SC, Cat. # 16-002-XWE*

## Organic Farming

- **Organic farming continues to take root, with BC boasting a per capita demand higher than in any other province.** In 2006, BC had only 13% of the nation's population, but represented more than a quarter (26%) of all Canadian certified organic food sales. In terms of growth, Alberta supermarkets had the highest jump in organic sales between 2005 and 2006 (+44.0%), followed by BC and the Atlantic provinces (each +34.0%).

There were 452 certified organic farms in BC in 2006, an increase of almost 42% over 2001. The growth over this period, was mostly attributable to increases in the number of producers of fruits & vegetables (+34.1%), hay or field crops (+41.7%) and animal products (+62.3%). In 2006, nearly 80% (358) of all certified organic farms in BC reported growing certified fruit, vegetable and greenhouse products, making BC the largest producer of these products in the country.

Although farming is a relatively small industry in BC, 13% of Canada's organic farmers were operating in the province in 2006. Saskatchewan was home to one third (1,181) of all organic farmers in 2006, while Quebec (23%) and Ontario (17%) also represented a substantial share. Alberta (6%), Manitoba (6%) and the Atlantic provinces (4% combined) made up comparatively smaller proportions. The number of certified organic farms in Canada has grown nearly 60% since 2001, from 2,230, to 3,555 in 2006. Despite the recent growth, certified organic producers still only represent about 1.5% of all farms in Canada. *Data Source: SC, Cat. # 16-002-XWE*

## Rail Transportation

- **Canadian railways carried a slightly lighter cargo load (-0.9%) in 2007 than in 2006, partly the result of a reduction in loadings related to the forestry sector and declining demands for raw minerals and manufactured products.** Despite the slip, pressing demand for commodities such as chemicals from Asian countries and South America helped keep business strong for railway carriers as more than 284.5 million metric tonnes of freight were loaded last year.

*Data Source: Statistics Canada*



For data originating from Statistics Canada, data sourced to 'Statistics Canada' has been retrieved from CANSIM, the agency's electronic database; otherwise the source is identified as 'SC' plus the catalogue number.

Infoline Report

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Originally published in
*Business Indicators* Issue 08-02

# The Aboriginal Population in BC and Recent Trends in Off-Reserve Aboriginal Labour Force Participation

## Aboriginal Population in BC

During the 2006 Census, 196,075 British Columbians (or 4.8 percent of BC's total population) identified themselves as Aboriginal. The Aboriginal population is made up of those persons who self-identified with at least one Aboriginal group (First Nations,[1] Métis, or Inuit) or who reported being a Treaty Indian or a Registered Indian (as defined by the Indian Act of Canada) or who were members of an Indian Band or First Nation.

Of the Aboriginal population in BC, First Nations account for 66 percent, followed by Métis (30%) and Inuit (0.4%). The remainder either identified with more than one group or were members of an Indian Band or First Nations and did not identify as Aboriginal.

In 2006, Aboriginal peoples accounted for 3.8 percent of the total Canadian population. British Columbia is home to the second largest Aboriginal population in Canada, after Ontario. Sixty percent of the Aboriginal population in BC are urban, up from 58 percent in 2001. At the time of the 2006 census, over 20 percent of the Aboriginal population in BC lived in the census metropolitan area of Vancouver.

Aboriginal people are much younger, on average, than the non-Aboriginal population. The median age of the Aboriginal population in BC was 28 in 2006, compared with 41, for the non-Aboriginal population. In 2006, Aboriginal people made up 5 percent of BC's prime working-age[2] population.

Over one-quarter of the Aboriginal population was under 15, compared with only 16 percent of the non-Aboriginal population. Thirteen percent of BC's non-Aboriginal population was between the ages of 15 and 24, compared with 18 percent of the Aboriginal population. At the other end of the age spectrum, 15 percent of BC's non-Aboriginal population was 65 and over, compared with only 5 percent of the Aboriginal population.

## The Labour Force Survey

Since April 2004, Statistics Canada has been collecting data through the monthly Labour Force Survey on the labour market status of Aboriginal peoples living off-reserve in British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan, and Manitoba. To gain additional information for the British Columbia component of the survey, the Province sponsored an increased sample, which was phased in over six months starting in October 2004. BC now has almost four full years of annual data covering the off-reserve First Nations and Métis populations living in BC. This report presents highlights from that data.[3]

## The Youth

The youth population (aged 15 to 24) can play an important role in the labour market, especially in times with very little unemployment. In 2007, the average unemployment rate for British Columbia's youth was 7.3 percent; however, Aboriginal youth still experienced higher incidences of unemployment. Their unemployment rate was

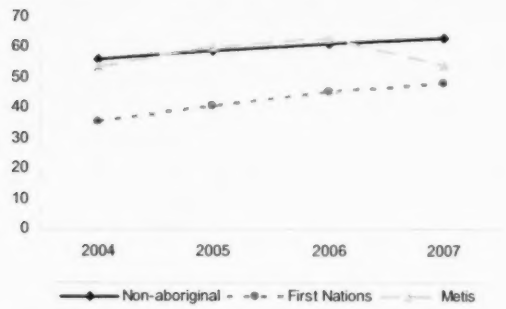
[1] First Nations as used here is synonymous with North American Indians.
[2] The prime working-age population is 15 to 64.

[3] The 2004 annual average is based on data collected between April 2004 and December 2004.

13.7 percent, which is almost double that of the non-Aboriginal youth population.

Overall, the employment rates[4] for non-Aboriginal youth have been increasing since 2004. This pattern also holds true for First Nations youth; however, in 2007, the employment rates decreased among Métis youth.

**Youth employment rates are increasing**




*Source: Labour Force Survey 2007*

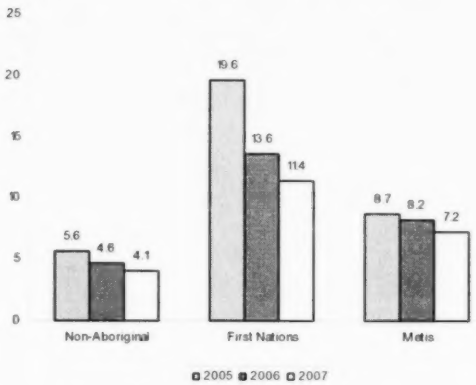
There are still some significant differences in educational attainment between Aboriginal youth and non-Aboriginal youth. For example in 2007, 20 percent of non-Aboriginal youth (15 to 24), excluding those who were still studying, had not yet completed a high school credential or a post-secondary credential, compared with 40 percent of Aboriginal youth. Non-Aboriginal youth are more likely to be attending school than Aboriginal youth: 48 percent compared with 41 percent.

**Labour Force Participations**

For the past several years British Columbia's labour force has been performing well and the unemployment rate has continued to decline, with an average unemployment rate of 4.2 percent in 2007.[5] However, the Aboriginal unemployment rate still remains more than double that of the non-Aboriginal population—9.7 percent. First Nations people show the highest incidence of unemployment; their unemployment rate of 11.4 percent is almost three times that of the non-Aboriginal population.

On the positive side, when the unemployment rates are compared for the past three years, First Nations people show a large decline in their unemployment rate, which dropped 8.2 percentage points between 2005 and 2007.

**Unemployment rates decline between 2005 and 2007**

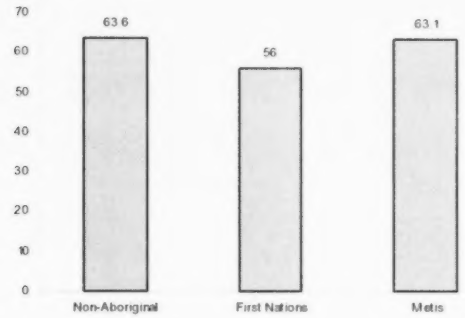



*Source: Labour Force Survey 2007*

In terms of the relative number of people in the three populations that are employed in BC, the differences are not nearly so prominent. Among the Métis population, the percentage of their population who have a job is almost identical to that of the non-Aboriginal population. However, the employment rate is still quite a bit lower for First Nations people.

[4] Employment rate (or the employment/ population ratio) is the number of persons employed expressed as a percentage of the population.
[5] Among the working-age population (15 and over).

**The employment rates for Métis and non-Aboriginal are almost identical in 2007**

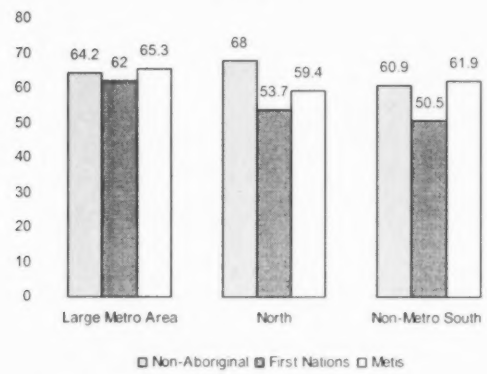



*Source: Labour Force Survey 2007*

Employment rates for the Aboriginal population vary from one region of the province to another. The differences in employment rates between the non-Aboriginal population and the Aboriginal population living off-reserve outside the large metro areas[6] are noteworthy. In 2007, more than two-thirds of non-Aboriginal people in the North were employed; yet this figure was only 53.7 percent for the First Nations population.

On the other hand, the Métis population has comparable employment rates in large metro areas and the non-metro south.

**Employment rates by Region**

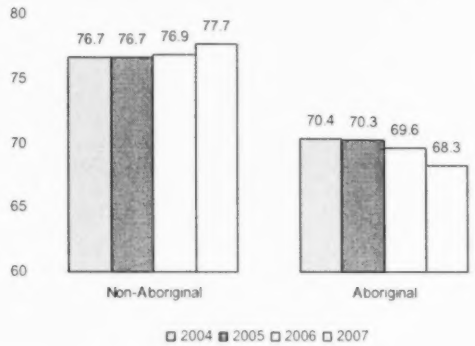



*Source: Labour Force Survey 2007*

[6] CMA of Vancouver, Victoria, Abbotsford, and Kelowna

Overall, the labour force participation rates for non-Aboriginal persons, aged 15 to 64, have been increasing since 2005; however, rates are declining for the Aboriginal population. Although the Aboriginal population is growing, the number of people in the labour force is not increasing at the same rate.

**The labour force participation rates are declining for the Aboriginal population**




*Source: Labour Force Survey 2007*

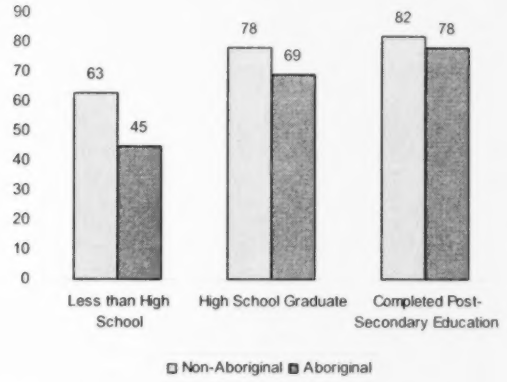
Education plays an important role in labour force success. Large gaps in educational attainment between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people continue to exist in BC. In 2007, more than a quarter (27 percent) of the prime working-age (15 to 64) Aboriginal people in BC did not have a high school credential, compared to 12 percent of the non-Aboriginal population. Only 37 percent of the Aboriginal population had completed a post-secondary credential,[7] compared with 55 percent of the non-Aboriginal population.

When you compare Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people who have completed post-secondary education many of the differences in employment rates[8] decrease. It becomes very clear that education plays a significant role in improving labour market outcomes.

[7] Trades certificate, college diploma or university certificate, or degree.

[8] The employment rate (or the employment/population ratio) is the number of persons employed expressed as a percentage of the population 15 to 64.

**The gap in employment rates between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people varies depending on education levels**



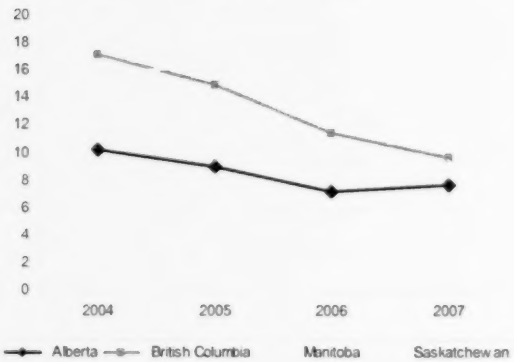

*Source: Labour Force Survey 2007*

## Regional Comparison

According to the 2006 Census, 60 percent of the Aboriginal population in Canada live in the four western provinces. Aboriginal people in Saskatchewan and Alberta experienced the highest employment growth out of the four western provinces, between 2004 and 2007. Aboriginal employment grew 18 percent in Saskatchewan and 16 percent in Alberta, while the non-Aboriginal employment rates increased 3 percent in Saskatchewan and 11 percent in Alberta. Over the same period, the Aboriginal employment growth in BC was much closer to the growth rate for the non-Aboriginal population—11 percent, compared with 9 percent for the non-Aboriginal population.

Between 2004 and 2007, the Aboriginal unemployment rate in BC dropped 8 percentage points, which represented the largest decline in the four western provinces. However, the Aboriginal unemployment rate is still more than double that of the non-Aboriginal population. In Saskatchewan the 2007 Aboriginal unemployment rate is more than triple that of the non-Aboriginal population—12.5 percent compared with 3.6 percent.

**The unemployment rate for the Aboriginal population in BC is improving**



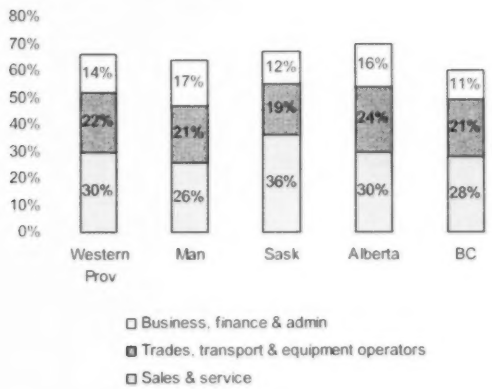

*Source: Labour Force Survey 2007*

In 2007, Aboriginal peoples in Alberta had the highest labour force participation (72 percent) followed by Manitoba (66 percent), BC (65 percent) and Saskatchewan (64 percent). For the non-Aboriginal population, BC has the lowest labour force participation of the four western provinces—66 percent, compared with the high of 74 percent in Alberta.

### Occupations and Wages

Overall, the top three occupational groups for Aboriginal people in BC are sales and service occupations (28 percent), trades, transport and equipment operators (21 percent), and business, finance and administration (11 percent). These three account for 61 percent of the off-reserve Aboriginal labour force in BC.

**The occupation profile for Aboriginal people in Western Canada is associated with three occupational groups**

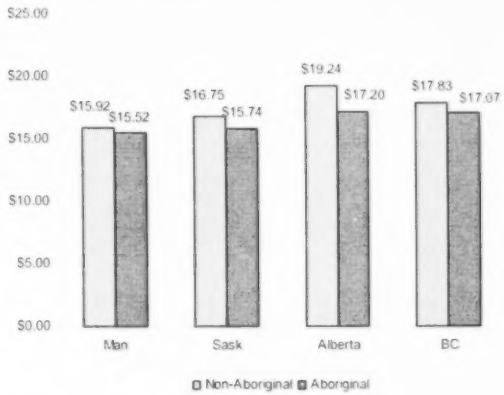



*Source: Labour Force Survey 2007*

The three occupational groups mentioned above account for 60 percent of the non-Aboriginal total in BC; however, the distribution is quite different. Twenty-six percent of non-Aboriginals are employed in the sales and service occupations, 17 percent show up in business, finance, and administration, and 16 percent are employed in the trades, transport, and equipment operators group.

Aboriginal employees in western Canada earn less, on average, than their non-Aboriginal counterparts. For example in 2007, Aboriginal employees with a high school credential earned $16.57 per hour compared to $18.02 per hour for non-Aboriginal employees.

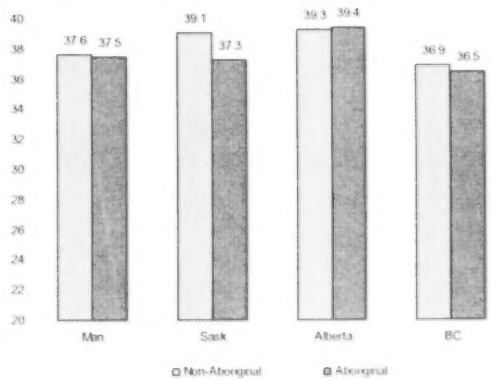
**Aboriginal employees with a high school credential earn less than their non-Aboriginal counterparts**




*Source: Labour Force Survey 2007*

Employed Aboriginal Albertans who have completed a high school diploma are doing slightly better than their counterparts in other provinces ($17.20 versus $15.52 per hour). Aboriginal employees in Alberta also work longer hours.

**Aboriginal people in Alberta work more hours than their counterparts in the other western provinces**




*Source: Labour Force Survey 2007*

*Infoline*

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also on the **Internet** at www.bcstats.gov.bc.ca

## *BC at a glance . . .*

| **POPULATION (thousands)** | Jan 1/08 | % change on one year ago |
|---|---|---|
| BC | 4,414.0 | 1.5 |
| Canada | 33,143.6 | 1.1 |
| **GDP and INCOME (Revised Nov 8)** | | % change on |
| *(BC - at market prices)* | 2006 | one year ago |
| Gross Domestic Product (GDP) *($ millions)* | 180,328 | 6.4 |
| GDP *($ 2002 millions)* | 158,335 | 3.3 |
| GDP *($ 2002 per Capita)* | 36,649 | 1.9 |
| Personal Disposable Income *($ 2002 per Capita)* | 24,051 | 5.2 |
| **TRADE ($ millions, seasonally adjusted)** | | % change on prev. month |
| Manufacturing Shipments - Jan | 3,370 | -0.4 |
| Merchandise Exports - Jan | 2,339 | 3.0 |
| Retail Sales - Jan | 4,811 | -0.2 |
| **CONSUMER PRICE INDEX** | % change on | 12-month avg |
| *(all items - Feb 2008)* | one year ago | % change |
| BC | 1.1 | 1.5 |
| Vancouver | 1.3 | 1.8 |
| Victoria | 0.5 | 0.9 |
| Canada | 1.8 | 2.2 |
| **LABOUR FORCE (thousands)** | | % change on |
| *(seasonally adjusted)* | Feb '08 | prev. month |
| Labour Force - BC | 2,403 | 0.0 |
| Employed - BC | 2,303 | -0.1 |
| Unemployed - BC | 99 | 1.6 |
| | | Jan '08 |
| Unemployment Rate - BC *(percent)* | 4.1 | 4.1 |
| Unemployment Rate - Canada *(percent)* | 5.8 | 5.8 |
| **INTEREST RATES (percent)** | Mar 26/08 | Mar 28/07 |
| Prime Business Rate | 5.25 | 6.00 |
| Conventional Mortgages - 1 year | 7.15 | 6.40 |
| - 5 year | 7.19 | 6.49 |
| **US-CANADA EXCHANGE RATE** | Mar 26/08 | Mar 28/07 |
| *(avg. noon spot rate)* Cdn $ per US $ | 1.0180 | 1.1580 |
| *(closing rate)* US $ per Cdn $ | 0.9815 | 0.8627 |
| **AVERAGE WEEKLY WAGE RATE** | | % change on |
| *(industrial aggregate - dollars)* | Feb '08 | one year ago |
| BC | 766.55 | 3.1 |
| Canada | 770.29 | 5.0 |

**SOURCES:**

Population, Gross Domestic Product, Trade, Prices, Labour Force, Wage Rate } Statistics Canada

Interest Rates, Exchange Rates: Bank of Canada Weekly Financial Statistics

For latest Weekly Financial Statistics see www.bankofcanada.ca

## The price is right

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www.bcstats.gov.bc.ca/releases/free_rel.asp

## High Technology - 2007

### Input Indicators of the British Columbia High Technology Sector - 2007 Edition

This publication highlights conditions affecting the province's high technology sector from a supply-side perspective by tracking 37 business and economic climate indicators for BC, with comparisons to other provinces.

www.bcstats.gov.bc.ca/data/bus_stat/busind/hi_tech.asp#HTpubs

## Topic Tables – 2006 Census

What are the top languages spoken at home in your community? Where were a community's immigrants born? A different approach.

www.bcstats.gov.bc.ca/data/cen06/topics/topics.asp

## 2007 Municipal Populations

Total population for municipalities and Regional Districts for July 1, 2007, as well as revised figures for 2002 to 2006, are now online.

www.bcstats.gov.bc.ca/data/pop/pop/estspop.asp

### Released this week by BC Stats

- Business Indicators, March 2008
- Current Statistics, March 2008
- Migration Highlights, 4th Quarter 2007

**• Next week**

- 2006 Census: on April 2, Ethnic Origin; Visible Minorities
- Labour Force Statistics, March 2008
- Earnings & Employment Trends, March 2008

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